

REMARKS

Claims 4-9, 13-17 and 22-27 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-3, 10-12, 19-21 and 28-31 were canceled; claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, 16, 17, 22, 23, 25, and 26 were amended; and no claims were added. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-5, 8, 10-14, 17, 19-21 and 26 over various combinations of prior art. The Examiner has also indicated that claims 6, 7, 9, 15, 16, 18, 22, 24, 25 and 27 contain allowable subject matters and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants' representative appreciates the Examiner's diligence and attention to detail and thanks the Examiner for the expeditious manner in which the allowable subject matters were identified.

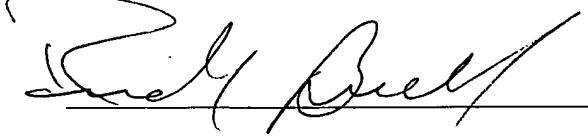
In reviewing the Examiner's Office Action, it was apparent that the Examiner considers the limitation requiring the policy decision point PDP to be independent of the policy enforcement point (PEP), an allowable subject matter. This limitation is solely contained in claim 22. The Examiner considered and rejected claims 4 and 13 which contained corresponding limitations to claim 22, but which did not require the policy decision point to be independent of the policy enforcement point (PEP). Therefore, each of claims 4 and 13 have been amended in accordance to the Examiner's implications and now contain a limitation requiring that the policy decision point be independent of the policy enforcement point (PEP). Claims 4 and 13 now contain identical limitations to those in claim 22 which the Examiner found allowable. Additionally, each of claims 4, 13 and 22 are now written in independent form and include all of the limitations of the base claim and all intervening claims

The claims have now been amended in accordance with the Examiner's comments and it is respectfully urged that subject application is patentable and is now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if, in the opinion of the Examiner, such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

DATE: 3/28/01

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rudolph J. Buchel Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

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